(Percentage comparison to All India Figure).

The disbursement of agricultural loans made by Public Sector Banks in Andhra Pradesh during 1995-96 under the Special Agricultural Credit Plan (April-March) as on the 30.9.1995 is as under:

(Rs. in crores)

Andhra Pradesh	All India
903.75 (18.5%)*	4874.91

*(Percentage comparison to All India Figure).

Handicrafts Products

79. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem appeared in the 'National Herald' of January 26, 1996 captioned, "Stress on handicrafts products";

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI G. VENKATSWAMY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The news item which appeared in the 'National Herald' of January 26, 1996 captioned, "Stress on handicrafts products" is the press release issued by the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts on the eve of the inauguration of the five day Indian Handicrafts & Gifts Fair held in New Delhi. In the release, the council highlighted the details regarding the nature of products to be displayed, the number of Indian manufacturers and experters likely to participate and the expected quantum of business to be generated etc.

(c) As the handicrafts sector earns valuable foreign exchange for the country, the Government is making all concerted efforts towards exploring new markets and promotion of lesser know crafts. The Indian Handicrafts and Gifts Fair, has become an annual international event of impressive magnitude. Since its inception in the year 1994, the Fair has helped in attracting more and more foreign buyers and generating business opportunities in the international markets.

NTPC Power Plants in Andhra Pradesh

80. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to enhance the capacity of NTPC Power plants in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to improve the functioining of power plants of NTPC in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) has submitted feasibility report for Ramagundam Super Thermal Power Project Stage-III (500 MW) in Andhra. Pradesh to Central Electricity Authority (CEA) in March, 1995 for techno-economic appraisal. The processing of the Project is however, held up because of non-availability of coal. In addition, feasibility reports for coal based Simhadri Thermal Power Project (2×500 MW) and nephtha based Hyderabad Metro Combined Cycle Power Project (650 MW) in Andhra Pradesh submitted by NTPC to CEA are also under techno-economic appraisal by CEA.

(c) Ramagundam Super Thermal Power Project (2100 MW) of NTPC has been operating at high availability/Plant Load Factor (PLF). PLF will be further improved on availability of sufficient coal for the plant.